

Water Restrictions for Aquarion's Hingham-Hull-North Cohasset System

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is Aquarion implementing water restriction measures?

State limits on the amount of water Aquarion is allowed to withdraw from its wells and reservoir have led the company to impose summertime restrictions on outside watering and irrigation in Hingham, Hull and North Cohasset. The company must abide by the annual limit on the amount of water withdrawn from its wells and reservoirs in the Weir River Watershed, as authorized by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). In 2015, water withdrawals approached 97 percent of the annual limit. The company is implementing summertime restrictions this year to ensure that the annual limit is not exceeded in 2016.

2. Who regulates the amount of water that water utilities can withdraw from the environment?

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) regulates and closely monitors the quantity of water that water utilities withdraw from the environment.

3. When can I water my lawn?

The water restrictions have been established pursuant to Aquarion's Rules and Regulations, as approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities.

The restrictions apply only to irrigation systems and hose-end sprinklers.

Customers with odd number street addresses may only water on Tuesdays and Saturdays, and those with even number street addresses may only water on Wednesdays and Sundays.

On these assigned days, customers are allowed to water before 10 a.m. and after 6 p.m., when evaporation losses will be minimized and more water goes to the plants' roots.

4. Is hand-held watering allowed?

Yes, hand-held watering is permitted at any time.

5. Am I allowed to wash my vehicles or fill a swimming pool?

Yes.

6. I use my own private well for irrigation; do these restrictions apply to me?

No. The restrictions do not apply to irrigation systems that are supplied with water from a private well.

7. Where can I find information on lawn and garden care?

Visit www.greenscapes.org for tips on lawn and garden care. According to Greenscapes:

- *Grass grows the deepest and healthiest roots with infrequent watering.*
- *Watering two days a week is more than adequate to have a beautiful lawn. In fact, research has shown that grass thrives with about an inch of rain a week - some supplied by Mother Nature and the rest by just one watering.*

Additional Lawn Irrigation Tips:

- *Set your mower at one of the higher cutting heights to help your lawn retain water. Keep your mower blades sharp. Dull blades tear grass and require it to use 40-60% more water to repair itself.*
- *Mulch your lawn naturally by letting clippings remain on the lawn. This will help stop water loss.*
- *Avoid over-watering by using a rain gauge to tell when your lawn needs water and also to measure how much you're applying. Generally, turf grasses need about ¾"—1" of water per week. If the forecast calls for rain, hold off on watering.*
- *Position your sprinklers to water only the lawn—not driveways, sidewalks, patios, or roads.*
- *For irrigation systems: The sprinkler heads should be adjusted so the areas they water don't overlap. Regularly inspect for leaks and repair them quickly. Equip the system with rain sensors so you don't waste water by irrigating while it's raining.*
- *When planting new grass, use one of the new drought-resistant grasses.*

8. How is our community doing in terms of water conservation compared to the rest of the nation?

Aquarion retained nationally-recognized water conservation expert Amy Vickers to evaluate water usage in Hingham, Hull, and north Cohasset. The results are as follows.

Residents in the three towns are generally conservative with water use, with the average single-family home in the three towns using 64 gallons of water per person per day (gpcd), compared to the national average of 88 gpcd.

However, the amount of water used varies widely from home to home. The average single-family home in the three towns uses 166 gallons per day (gpd). Homes in the top 1% of water users in the three towns use an average of 865 gpd (more than 5 times the water usage of the average home), while homes in the bottom 50% of water users in the three towns, use only 84 gpd.

The wide variation of water usage between homes can be attributed to differences in both indoor and outdoor water usage. Compared to the average home in the three towns, homes in the top 1% of water users use 3.5 times more water for indoor use and more than 10 times more water for outdoor use.

Across all single-family homes in the three towns, 23% of the water consumed is used for outdoor water use.

If you need further assistance, please contact:

Aquarion's Customer Service Department at 1-800-928-3734 or at
AquarionCustomerService@aquarionwater.com